

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /055 W

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R 040814Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1902

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 12105

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, ET

SUBJ: REORGANIZATION OF THE DIRG

REF: ADDIS ABABA 11836 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: AS RESULT OF MONTHLONG INTENSIVE DELIBERATIONS WITH DIRG, APPEARS THAT DIRG WILL SHORTLY BE RESTRUCTURED INTO SMALLER, MORE MANAGEABLE BODY, CONSISTING OF 50-MAN CENTRAL COMMITTEE, PRESIDED OVER BY 15-MAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, WITH REMAINDER OF OLD DIRG MEMBERSHIP TO BE FARMED OUT TO PROVINCES. SHARP DISCUSSIONS REPORTEDLY TAKING PLACE OVER COMPOSITION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, WITH MENGISTU ON ONE HAND TRYING TO INCLUDE ONLY MEMBERS OF HIS PERSUASION AND OTHERS SEEKING TO RETAIN EXISTING WIDER SPECTRUM OF OPINION. FOR MOMENT AT LEAST, LATTER GROUP APPEARS TO HAVE UPPER HAND. END SUMMARY.

1. EXTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS WITHIN THE DIRG WHICH HAVE BEEN TAKING PLACE CONTINUOUSLY SINCE EARLY NOVEMBER APPEAR TO INVOLVE FUNDAMENTAL REORGANIZATION OF ETHIOPIAN GOVERNING BODY. ACCORDING TO SOURCES CLOSE TO DIRG AND INFORMED DIPLOMAT, PRESENT DIRG TO BE RESTRUCTURED AS 50-MEMBER CENTRAL COMMITTEE, OF WHICH 15-17 WOULD BE CHOSEN TO FORM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. REMAINING MEMBERS

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OF PRESENT DIRG WOULD BE SENT TO COUNTRYSIDE TO BUILD

BASIS FOR NATIONAL PARTY STRUCTURE. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS WOULD SERVE AS CHAIRMEN OF VARIOUS SUB-COMMITTEES WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR DAY-TO-DAY EXECUTION OF POLICY.

2. COMPOSITION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SUBJECT OF HEATED AND CONTINUOUS DEBATE, REPORTEDLY BECAUSE OF MENGISTU'S INSISTENCE OF PACKING COMMITTEE WITH INDIVIDUALS FAVORABLE TO HIM. THIS HAS EVOKED DISSATISFACTION FROM OTHER GROUPS WITHIN DIRG, AND REPORTS ARE CIRCULATING THAT

MENGISTU'S USUALLY SUPREME DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY HAS BEEN SUSPENDED, AT LEAST WITH RESPECT TO COMPOSITION AND SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS OF REORGANIZED BODY.

3. ACCORDING TO ONE SOURCE, AS COMPLEMENT TO CENTRAL AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES, ALL ETHIOPIAN SOCIALIST FRONT, CHARGED WITH BUILDING OF INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES ALONG PARTY LINES, TO BE CREATED UNDER LEADERSHIP OF HAILE FIDE AS ONE WING OF PEOPLE'S MASS MASS ORGANIZATION. ANOTHER SOURCE MAINTAINS THAT HAILE FIDE WILL NOT HAVE LEADING ROLE IN NEW GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE. DR. SENAYE LIKKE REPORTEDLY WILL HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF LABOR STRUCTURE. AT SOME FUTURE DATE BOTH THESE LATTER ORGANIZATIONS REPORTEDLY TO BE UNITED WITH DIRG INTO COMMON FRONT UPON WHICH GOVERNMENT WILL BE BASED. MEMCONS CONTAINING DETAILS OF ABOVE INFORMATION BEING POUCHED.

4. IF REPORTS ARE TRUE, THIS SHUFFLE FALLS WELL SHORT OF EVEN PARTIAL RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE, TO WHICH DIRG IS COMMITTED IN LONG RUN AND WHICH WAS AGAIN HINTED AT IN RECENT PMAC STATEMENT (REFTEL). REORGANIZATION WOULD, HOWEVER, SERVE USEFUL PURPOSE OF PRUNING OUT DEADWOOD ON DIRG, CLARIFYING LINES OF RESPONSIBILITY AND THEREBY PRESUMABLY SIMPLIFYING DECISION-MAKING PROCESS. IF MENGISTU WERE TO HAVE HIS WAY, LATTER PROCESS WOULD BE SIMPLIFIED EVEN FURTHER, BUT OPPOSITION WITHIN DIRG APPEARS SUFFICIENTLY STRONG TO MAINTAIN PRESENT CONFIGURATION OF FORCES AND PREVENT MENGISTU FROM RUNNING WHOLE SHOW.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REFORM, POLITICAL STABILITY, MILITARY GOVERNMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ADDIS12105
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760449-0760
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761271/aaaacjdq.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 ADDIS ABABA 11836
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28 JUN 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <29 JUN 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REORGANIZATION OF THE DIRG
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, ET
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006